



How to Write a Reflection Paper

Reflection of Angela Jones' Lecture on Poverty

The lecture started off with a quote: “If we can conquer space, we can conquer world hunger” — Buzz Aldrin. This quote had already got me to start thinking about how we’ve sent humans and animals to space. If it’s possible to survive in the infinite vacuum we know as Space, how are there billions of people who can barely survive on Earth? This simple idea made got my attention and made me feel sympathy for the starving children and families in third world countries. On a morning like any other, our guest professor gave a lecture that truly impacted me to my core.

At the start of the lecture, I was surprised to learn just how many countries around the world there are who don’t have access to clean water, medical services and basic education. Around 22,000 children die from poverty every day, globally — that’s about 8 million yearly. And 1.2 billion of the world’s population are living in extreme poverty conditions. I think everyone is aware that poverty exists in our world, but it was more of a shock to me to find out the overall impact of that poverty on your likeliness to survive, and just how prevalent poverty is in our world. Why did this depress me and why did I feel sorrow when I looked like many of the students around me didn’t feel the same way? Perhaps it was the underlying idea I’ve had that unfortunate circumstances could materialize with anyone as a result of chance — potentially an idea only present in my mind because of the unfortunate circumstances I’ve encountered in the past. I felt a bit weird that I seemed to feel more sensitive to the situation than my peers.

To me, it’s relatively shocking to consider that in our country, we all have access to clean water, food, medical care, education, plus more. I felt truly saddened to learn about the way these people are forced to live. Not only is it a few countries, but dozens of countries; primarily in South America, Africa and Asia. Not just that, but some European countries are also living in extreme conditions.



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Our guest professor, Angela Jones, from the University of Austin, had witnessed the type of poverty we've been talking about first-hand. She showed us videos of herself helping poor children in Djibouti. They were all very young, and they looked like they were only made up of skin and bones. It was my first time seeing people like this, and I was quite shaken. I can't imagine what it must be like for them, but I can imagine how shocked and saddened the volunteers on the video were; it's how I felt just by watching the video.

During the lecture, Angela asked us to brainstorm ways to support these children in Djibouti and other third world countries. Upon being asked, I felt a sense of tranquillity and relief, because we were thinking of ways we could help save millions of lives. I could hear some people muttering the same thought I was having; "what could we do to help them without physically going to that country to support them?" To me, these problems felt like a world away from us, with no solution.

Angela showed us another video of a lady helping a two year old boy, who looked like he was only skin and bones. Then Angela showed us another piece of footage, which was taken three years after. In this footage, it was the same boy who was now five years old. He was clothed and looked healthy. He also had a backpack on his back for school. I was happy for the boy, yet still sad for all of the others who undoubtedly didn't get the help they needed.

Later on, Angela showed us some videos that illustrated how some countries used to be the third world, but are now no longer. They used to have the same problems as countries like Djibouti. She showed us how these countries were once full of poverty and how they were transformed with the help of foreign aid. To see how the people of those countries are no longer living in extreme conditions brought some



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solace back to me.

As a result of the lecture, I learnt that it doesn't actually take that much effort to help children in third world countries. An option we were suggested was to get together to raise money for charities, which provide things that these children don't have access to. I would like to believe that so little can mean so much.

I have no excuses to not support children and families in desperate need around the world — even though I naturally want to hold on to what I have for other things. I know that even the most minimal effort can change the lives of so many unfortunate people. I would like to change the attitudes of people in regards to this epidemic for the sake of the world. I believe that no one should be forced to live in poverty, and no one chose to live in it. Too many children die every day; it's truly something that shocks and depresses me.

I find it amazing that some countries have managed to bounce back from poverty thanks to foreign aid. I think that foreign aid might be the best, if not only, option for the millions of children and families in poverty around the world to get help. No one wants to be born into poverty. I feel true sorrow and pity for these unfortunate people in our world. I think we should act upon this now, and the fact that we and many other countries are no longer facing poverty, is no excuse. That's why I've decided to donate to charity.